

SENATE RESOLUTION 7001

By Bryson

A RESOLUTION to respectfully request any member of the Senate who is currently under indictment by a state or federal court and whose charges have not been favorably disposed of to refrain from participating in or voting on any matter brought before the first extraordinary session of the 104th General Assembly.

WHEREAS, on December 19, 2005, the Honorable Phil Bredesen, Governor of the State of Tennessee, by proclamation, called the 104th General Assembly into extraordinary session on Tuesday, January 10, 2006 at eleven o'clock, central standard time; and

WHEREAS, the stated purpose of the extraordinary session is for the General Assembly to conduct a comprehensive review of current state laws, rules policies and practices related to ethics in government and to enact legislation to implement broad reforms in these areas; and

WHEREAS, the need for an extraordinary session to enact a comprehensive rewrite of the ethics laws relating to the operation of government in Tennessee was clearly brought to light by the May 26, 2005, arrests of four members of the General Assembly, three of whom were Senators, based upon indictments returned to the United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee alleging violations of federal law relating to extortion and bribery; and

WHEREAS, while two of these indicted members have resigned from the General Assembly, two remain members and, while awaiting disposition of these charges, will be members of the Senate when the special session convenes on January 10; and

WHEREAS, if this General Assembly is to regain the confidence and trust of the citizens of this state, it is imperative that this extraordinary session be conducted in a manner that is above reproach and avoids even the slightest appearance of impropriety; because this critical

period may well represent the last best chance for this body to restore public trust in the legislature as an institution; and

WHEREAS, while it is recognized and understood that they are duly elected and seated members of the 104th General Assembly, they are not constitutionally required to participate and vote during this extraordinary session and for them to do so would be a distraction and only serve to make the very serious work faced by the Senate all the more difficult; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that any member of the Senate who is under indictment by a federal or state court at the time the first extraordinary session convenes on January 10, 2006, is respectfully requested to refrain from participating in, or voting on, any matter that comes before the General Assembly during such extraordinary session.